

## The Cross of Serra

MOST REV. JOHN J. CANTWELL, D.D.

Bishop of Los Angeles and San Diego

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HERE under kindly skies, not far from San Diego's historic bay, amid a riot of beauty, in which human artistry is rivaled only by the exquisite bounty of the Divine Architect, come we to erect an altar of the Lord of Hosts. We thank Him who has given men the power to conceive and to do mighty things. We pray a benediction upon the City of San Diego, and upon all who are within its gates. It is to no mean city San Diego invites her friends. She had her beginnings ere General Washington crossed the Delaware, before the Charter of America's liberty was written. Today in the hour of gladness, like the bride in rich adornment, she stands forth in pride of place among cities which are her equals and her seniors in history.

It is written in Holy Scripture that unless the Lord build the city, they labor in vain who build it. Such was the conviction of the Spanish Conquistadores. They, eager as was their lust for treasure and keen their pursuit of El Dorado, saw to it that the native children of the soil were taught the rudiments of Christian Faith and the amenities of Christian living. The Spanish sovereigns, whether we speak of Charles V or Charles VIII, flung around the untamed Indian the mantle of the Church. It is true that at times they failed to protect him from the ruthlessness of an undisciplined and adventurous soldiery.

How well Spain succeeded in her civilizing mission is perceived in the growth and development of the native races that came under her ægis. She gave to the great republics of the South her language, her culture and her religion. So, in the sunset hour of a fading glory when the freighted galleons of Castile rested on the waters of yonder bay, Don Gaspar Portola had with him the gray-robed sons of the

great Francis of Assisi. While the former would ambition new territory for his sovereign, these holy men would claim for God the wild children of the mesa and mountain, for His they were by creation and Redemption.

#### THE CROSS OF SERRA

The achievements of the austere son of St. Francis, Fray Junipero Serra, more than the gallant deeds of a great soldier, have thrilled the Californian even to the present. The artist walks with him in his missionary labors, the poet sings of his unselfish deeds, and our folklore continues to perpetuate his memory. The flag of Spain no longer floats in the breeze, but the Cross that Fray Junipero Serra planted in California's virgin soil still casts its shadow on the land, and the Missions that he builded like watchtowers along life's highway were, and were not, and now they live again. San Diego, San Luis Rey, and his own beloved San Juan Capistrano, and San Gabriel, and the rest, are again Houses of Prayer, and the sacring bell, tinkling within the venerable walls, proclaims to a new people in the old land, that God is still Emmanuel. He has again come to visit and to bless His people.

It is a singular thing that Spain, which for centuries claimed the sea as its own highway, that penetrated the glades of the Floridas, that sent Cortez to the Aztecs and Pizzaro to the Incas, in a comparatively short period of time should have lost its pride of place in the pageant of the nations' march. St. Augustine has written that the ancient Romans, because of their natural virtues, were permitted for a time to live happily and to grow to the might of a far-flung empire. But the Rome that triumphed in its younger days was comprised of citizens austere in their lives, noble in their domestic relations, and honorable in their social dealings. A time came to the great City on the Tiber, when the wealth of conquered nations poured into its lap. Her citizens, intoxicated with pride, rendered weak, effeminate and selfish by the luxury of high-living, forgot the traditions of an elder day; and thus the nation that conquered Greece and laid Carthage in ruins came to find itself powerless and friendless as the conquering barbarians hammered at its gate.

So it seems to have been with Spain. She was ruined by the wealth of the Indies and the Americas. She, her eyes

dimmed by the glory of her own valorous deeds, quenched in her soul the light that kindled the music in the hearts of her people, that produced the rarest flowers of chivalry, and that gave us a Litany of the Saints. May we not hope that that great nation, purified by defeat, again shall rise and re-live her noble history and take her place in perfecting the Christian civilization of the nations?

The Church, ever mindful of her divine vocation, sent the first Apostles to California. The Sons of St. Francis here lifted up the Cross, which is the symbol of Christian civilization. It is a warning sign to all who pass that man has not an abiding city here below. When it is in triumph, the Gentiles walk in its light. When it is in eclipse, nations rise up in battle array and peoples perish.

#### BASIS OF CIVILIZATION

This country of ours these many years has abounded in the fruits of great material and scientific development. So mighty have been the works of human genius and human art, so easy has been life, that people have come to regard material rewards as the *ultima thule* of human destiny. Economic depression has not brought to us the same burden of poverty, of sorrow and degradation that it has inflicted on other countries. The material prosperity and luxury which destroyed Rome and weakened Spain, threatens our own people today. For it is as certain as God is in heaven, that morality is the foundation and basic principle of an enduring civilization. The Persian monarch in the days of old, drunk with material power, allocated to himself the prerogatives of God. The king set up his own statue in a high place. He sent his criers all over the land and bade his subjects to come and adore. Jehovah was displeased. The monarch fell from his throne; his people came under the yoke of the stranger.

#### GOD BEING DETHRONED

There is little doubt but that Almighty God is being dethroned in this country which owes Him so much. His law does not run among the people. Strange gods have been set up for our worship. The American people are losing the austere and virtuous characteristics of the pioneers. Has it not been written for our learning: "Thou shalt not commit

adultery; Thou shalt not covet; Thou shalt not steal; Thou shalt not bear false witness"?)

In another day the sinner knew he did evil, and was shamed. Shame is not a characteristic of the sinner today. Contrition and repentance are among the forgotten virtues. There is a system of philosophy taught in our universities and colleges unknown to the early American. It finds in nature an apology for vice. It denies the immortality of the soul, and the accountability of man to any higher power than himself. The body with its passions dominates the soul. The grip of Christianity on a nation is ever precarious, and where that grip is released ancient vices return. We are changing a Christian culture for pagan, and allowing the horse to run away with the rider.

#### HERESY OF ACTION

The great Apostle St. Paul warns us of the perversion of human nature by sin. He says: "I have a law in my members fighting against the law of my mind, and urging me to do that which I would not." And that law, operating independently of the spirit, challenges the virtue of chastity and degrades the sacredness of marriage. Youth grows up undisciplined and untamed. It resists parental authority, and questions the right of father and mother in the love that makes his own existence possible. The heresy of today is not one of unbelief, it is a heresy of action. But this modern heresy is the natural outcome of a denial of God's Commandments and of the love that founded a great Church. The philosophy of today is not new; it is older than the years of Christianity. It has had its adherents in all ages, and has a wide appeal: "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."

The Christian civilization of California was grounded on happier and firmer principles. It was love of God and of God's most abandoned creatures that pressed the Franciscan Fathers to spend themselves and be spent in the unselfish care of the aborigines. While concerned with their spiritual growth, they looked well to the physical and material comfort of their charges. It would be well at all times, but more especially now, if those who live in the house of Plenty had some of the solicitude of Francis of Assisi for those who live in the house of Want. St. Thomas Aquinas, the

Angel of Schools, writes that there are two things necessary for man,—the exercise of virtue, making him aware of his eternal and ultimate destiny, and the possession of sufficient worldly goods, enabling him to put a true value on material things.

#### VALUE OF THE SPIRITUAL

The Church of God realizes that it is hard for those who toil from morning till evening, year in and year out, to be reconciled to conditions that evaluate a human being as a unit in a great industrial machine, and tabulates him according to the scientific rules of the specialist. These conditions are rendered much more intolerable when the poor, hearing their wives and children crying for bread, see the idle rich living in splendid luxury.

The Church of Jesus Christ, rich with the experience of the ages, speaking through its Supreme Pontiffs, Leo XIII and Pius XI, is warning the world today of great evils impending over civilized nations unless the Commandments of God are obeyed and Christ be recognized as the Prince of Peace. It should not require the voice of the Head of the great Church to tell these things to the world. If industrialism and capitalism attune their ears they will hear the rumbling of an aroused world protesting against the abuses of a system that constrains the many to a form of slavery unworthy of creatures made to the likeness of God, and called to the fulness of the age of Christ. O, when will men realize that the teachings of the Gospel epitomized in the great Papal Encyclicals are the only constructive forces that will bring back enduring prosperity, sanctity and peace to a distracted world? It is only when capital becomes Christian we shall have no fear of anarchy. It is only when Christ is introduced into the Councils of the Nations that true concord can prevail among Christian men and women.

We in the United States should be quick to evaluate things spiritual. The men who immortalized Plymouth Rock and championed religious freedom on the shores of the Chesapeake, as well as they who landed on our Silver Strand, were witnesses to a world more enduring than this. They, each according to their lights, sought to find in this new land another Eden and the reign of Divine Law. We, in California particularly, should find it easy to emphasize the

eternal verities. "The ocean, whose purple waves in ebb and flow lave our shores, should remind us of that tideless sea, on whose waters Jesus is the Pilot, and His Mother Mary the Evening Star." The very earth beneath our feet, carpeted with flowers of rainbow hues, and touched by the springtide zephyrs, is verily the footstool of God. As we lift our eyes to the challenge of snow-capped mountains, sending their limpid streams over parched and arid plains, making hill and valley luscious and verdant, we exalt our hearts still higher to the eternal mountains whence flow down the living waters of grace, to soften things more stubborn than earth,—hearts—chilled by human ambitions; human pride, human fickleness and human greed. Our vision rests on that mountain which is on top of all the mountains. There we see a city more beautiful than man's mind can conceive or his genius fashion. Its walls are of jasper; its portals are of pearl; its shining gates are flung open wide, and within on the Great White Throne is Jesus, the World's Redeemer and the World's King, inviting the ransomed of all the nations to come and fill the vacant places.

## Capitalistic Trends Condemned

REV. CHARLES P. BRUEHL, D.D.

*The first of four radio addresses delivered May 12, 1935, over Station WFIL on the general topic: "The Catholic Church and the Social Order." The second lecture was entitled: "The Papal Program of Economic Reform," and the third: "The N.I.R.A. in the Light of Christian Principles." The fourth is reprinted in this issue. Text taken from The Catholic Standard and Times (Philadelphia).*

THE condemnation of existing economic conditions has become widespread in our days and the imperative need of drastic reforms is well nigh universally recognized. The reason for this general dissatisfaction with the prevailing industrial system is the plain fact that it has ceased to function properly and come to an abrupt standstill which affects adversely all the factors involved in the economic process. Round about us, wherever we cast our eyes, we see idle machinery, idle industrial plants of every type, idle merchandise and what is worse, idle hands. Production no

longer is profitable because it has outrun not the needs of the consumer but his purchasing power. Accordingly we have that paradoxical situation which has been described as poverty amid plenty or want in the midst of abundance.

This state of affairs pleases no one; not the industrialist because profits and dividends have been reduced to the vanishing point; not the laborer because unemployment robs him of his one means of a decent livelihood and compels him to become an object of public relief; not the general public because the economic status of every member of the community is seriously threatened. Our industrial system has proved a sad failure. It stands condemned as economically unsound.

### FOLLY OF CAPITALISM

But the point I wish to make is this, that our capitalistic system of unrestricted production did not fall into general disfavor until its recent spectacular collapse when its breakdown plunged the country into misery. Up to the calamitous depression which came with a startling suddenness it was held in high esteem and regarded as a very satisfactory industrial arrangement. That it worked harm to some portions of the community was admitted, but this was overlooked in view of the general splendor of its achievements and the enormous wealth it had created. When, however, it became evident that this fabulous prosperity could not be maintained men revised their views and condemned what they had exalted.

The opposition to our discredited capitalistic order springs from practical motives. Capitalism has brought upon itself popular indignation because it was unable to perpetuate the prosperity of which it had given us such an enticing but unfortunately fleeting glimpse. It had undermined itself and sapped its own foundations. Prosperity rests on production; as long as production goes on at a brisk pace so long we have good wages and attractive profits. Production, however, will halt unless there is steady and adequate consumption; but consumption cannot continue if there is not widely diffused purchasing power, continually renewing itself. Purchasing power cannot remain on a high level if wealth is not diffused throughout the whole nation.

Here is the fatal point where our system failed. Instead

of making for a wide diffusion of wealth and an ever-extending purchasing power, it resulted in a concentration of wealth in the hands of the few and a consequent narrowing of the purchasing power of the many. Excessive profits have absorbed to a large extent the purchasing and consuming power of society and thus slowed up the machinery of production, the inevitable result being the present business depression. Capitalism by its immoderate pursuit of gain has run industry and business into a blind alley. It stands convicted of economic folly and it is this economic foolishness that has awakened our generation to a realization of its inherent defects.

#### SYSTEM MORALLY OBJECTIONABLE

Long before it was apparent that our system of unregulated competition must result in self-defeat and economic failure, religion had voiced strong disapproval on moral grounds. Let us remember that one of the strongest denunciations of unregulated competition ever uttered emanated from Leo XIII at a time when capitalism flourished and few voices were raised to criticize its fundamental tenets or impeach its practices. Even then religious-minded men foresaw and predicted its eventual downfall on the score that a system which is morally objectionable cannot be economically sound and lasting. Their keener vision perceived the feet of clay on which the colossus of modern capitalism reared its towering stature; or better still penetrated to the inner moral hollowness of the gigantic structure and confidently prophesied the coming doom.

It redounds to the credit of the Church and churchmen that they have anticipated by many decades the modern criticism of the now totally discredited capitalism and have manifested greater economic wisdom and vision than the economic scholars of the day who extolled the triumphs of ruthless competition and promised even greater successes. The distrust which the Church always entertained with regard to historical capitalism has been amply justified. The Church has always challenged it for moral reasons, the world now challenges it on account of its economic inadequacy. There is an intimate relation between these two phases since the disastrous outcome of capitalistic production followed logically from its lack of moral orientation.



## CHURCH CONDEMNED CAPITALISM

Why then are Church and religion radically antagonistic to the dominating trends in modern capitalism? We say dominating trends for unquestionably there also are valuable elements in this system which has developed human resources to an unprecedented degree and produced wealth such as the world has never seen before.

The basic grievance of the Church against capitalism is that it entirely divorced economic activity from morality and emancipated it entirely from all social control. But when human nature is freed from moral restraint it has a fashion of developing very unlovely traits and these ugly traits quickly became manifest in the leaders of industry. If the law of God does not govern human relations another law invariably takes its place. So it happened in this case: the law of the jungle, the law of tooth and claw, rather than the Sermon of the Mount became the dynamic force in the evolution of capitalism. Humane considerations were set aside and ruthlessness held supreme sway in the domain of economic life. In the ensuing terrific struggle the weak succumbed and unscrupulosity triumphed and captured the economic prizes. Never has the pet fallacy of modern times, the inherent goodness of man, been shown up more glaringly than in the devastation wrought by unfettered human nature in the world of industry.

Even in its heyday capitalism never produced anything like universal well being. The dark shadows associated with industrial expansion were swallowed up in the brilliant light of its material successes and perceived only by the keenly sensitized religious eye. In the better days the wounds inflicted by unhampered competition were healed by charity which softened the worst abuses incidental to the ruthless pursuit of profits. When the general prosperity of the community declined these wounds could not longer be covered up and became evident to every eye.

It is now plain that industry if left without moral restraint does not work for the benefit of mankind. The theories of the classical economists have been refuted by the terrible logic of facts. Self-interest, egotism, acquisitiveness are not benevolent and harmonizing forces which spontaneously produce justice and secure the welfare of all. Un-

less duly curbed they are destructive agencies and work havoc.

#### WEALTH AND POVERTY IN CAPITALISM

Religion has a quarrel with capitalism because on the one side it causes excessive wealth and on the other degrading poverty. Both conditions are harmful and imperil man's spiritual well being. Christianity has never glorified riches because it sees in them a subtle danger. It can have no sympathy for a system which has a tendency to concentrate wealth in the hands of those who are likely to use it for their spiritual undoing. It can have still less sympathy for a system which condemns many to a poverty in which it is extremely difficult to maintain human dignity and observe the decencies of a moral life. Grinding poverty disintegrated character and lowers the resistance to the solicitations of evil.

Economic uncertainty distracts man's thoughts from his higher interests and focuses his attention on his bodily needs. Pius XI pens a fearful indictment of our economic situation when he writes:

"How universally has the true Christian spirit become impaired, which formerly produced such lofty sentiments even in uncultured and illiterate men! In its stead, man's solicitude is to obtain his daily bread any way he can. And so bodily labor, which was decreed by Providence for the good of man's body and soul even after original sin, has everywhere been changed into an instrument of strange perversion: for dead matter leaves the factory ennobled and transformed, where men are corrupted and degraded."

The Church's mission is to elevate and save men; how then can it feel kindly towards a system which by degrading and corrupting men undoes her work and paves the way for the ruin of immortal souls?

#### LABOR VERSUS CAPITAL

As the exponent of Christian morality the Church cannot remain indifferent to the essential injustice of the distribution of the earnings of industry under the existing economic régime. According to the Papal Encyclical capital and labor are joint partners in the creation of the national wealth. It may be difficult to determine the exact share to

which each one of the parties concerned is entitled but it is quite certain that the reward which labor actually receives does not at all correspond to the important part it plays in the process of production. The wages of labor do not represent its just share of the return of industry.

Now the wage contract on which capitalistic production hinges is morally unobjectionable only if the division of the final output of industry observes the canons of justice. This not being the case it is plain that the Church has no reason for putting the stamp of approval on our industrial order since she cannot wish to perpetuate the injustice that vitiates this order at its very core.

#### CHRISTIAN CONCEPT

One of the most beautiful ideals of Christianity is the ideal of human brotherhood. Christ for the first time proclaimed to a strife-torn world the law of universal, neighborly love. It is this law that has shed a sweet radiance and mild effulgence over all human relations and softened the harshness of social contacts. Out of this law were born mutual helpfulness, coöperation, teamwork, the spirit of service and genuine benevolence toward the weak, which strikingly differentiate Christian from pagan civilization. A Christian world should be pervaded from one end to the other by the law of charity as the law of gravitation runs through the physical universe and reaches to the remotest stars binding them together in undisturbed harmony.

How sharply does the modern industrial world contrast with this Christian concept of society? This modern economic world draws its inspiration from the philosophy of strength, of rugged individualism and of ruthless competition. It has erected the most untractable passion of the human breast, cupidity, into the mainspring of economic activity. Excessive possibilities of gain have reinforced the deepest impulses of selfishness and converted the innate acquisitiveness of man into insatiable greed. A fierce struggle and violent scramble for the goods of this earth were the natural outcome of this un-Christian philosophy and industry was turned into a battlefield of unrelieved and unrestrained rivalry.

In view of this false philosophy which actuates our economic life we need not be surprised that class antagonism,

class hatred and class warfare are the outstanding features of our times. Do I need to say that a society which is split into hostile camps fails to realize the Christian pattern of a universal brotherhood?

#### CHURCH, THE FRIEND OF LABOR

Following the example of its Divine Founder the Church has throughout history manifested great interest in the laborer, the poor and the masses and endeavored to ease their hard lot in life. Our present industrial organization is particularly hard on the wage earner, the poor and the masses, and places crushing burdens on their weary shoulders. It is natural then that a tension should arise between Christianity and the modern economic order and that the Church should vigorously take up the battle for the oppressed, the downtrodden and the exploited.

We sum up. The Church is not committed to the upholding of the existing economic order because it has not arisen under her auspices nor does it in any way exemplify the Christian spirit. Uncompromisingly she sets her face against social injustice in every form and will not rest until the glaring abuses and economic evils of our days have been remedied and removed. Every effort will she direct to the task of assisting in the construction of an economic order that embodies the spirit of Christ, conforms to the dictates of fundamental justice, eases the burdens of the masses, improves the condition of labor and secures for all a richer and more abundant life.

# Spiritual Renewal for Social Reform

REV. CHARLES P. BRUEHL, D.D.

*The fourth of the radio addresses, delivered on June 2, 1935, over Station WFIL, as published in The Catholic Standard and Times (Philadelphia).*

THE dramatic crash of the N.R.A., and particularly the opposition, with which it met from the beginning in many quarters, clearly indicate that social reconstruction cannot be brought about by external compulsion alone but must be the outgrowth of the moral regeneration of human society. Even the most elaborate legal system remains inert and ineffective unless it is supported by the enlightened moral sentiment of the community. It is for this reason that Pius XI, while strongly urging concrete legal measures of reform insists still more emphatically on the spiritual and religious regeneration of men, which will infuse into the dead letter of the law the dynamic and vivifying spirit.

"If we examine matters diligently and thoroughly," he writes, "we shall perceive clearly that this longed-for social reconstruction must be preceded by a profound renewal of the Christian spirit, from which multitudes engaged in industry in every country have unhappily departed. Otherwise, all our endeavors will be futile, and our social edifice will be built, not upon a rock, but on shifting sand."

These words echo the sentiments of Leo XIII, who in his days uttered the same thought, saying: "And if society is to be healed now, in no other way can it be healed save by a return to Christian life and institutions." Modern social science concurs in this view and admits the barrenness of all social reform, which is not inspired and reinforced by religious sentiment. Thus, Dr. Charles A. Ellwood frankly declares:

"If there is one thing which the scientific study of social life has revealed clearly, it is the power of religion over the social and personal life of man; and we have no right to assume that man will be able to dispense with this power in the future. Science has discovered no substitute for religion as a spring of social idealism. Religion, therefore, must continue to furnish the aspiration, the motive, for the realization of ideal social ends."

Accordingly we cannot easily exaggerate the vital part which Christianity must play in the rebuilding of our shattered economic order. In fact, thoughtful reflection will make us see that there are only two powers in the world which are able to halt the disintegration of the social organism: on the one side is the iron hand of despotism, which will lay on men the galling yoke of economic servitude, and on the other side is the spirit of Christianity which will socialize the hearts of men and make them realize the beauty of service.

#### RELIGIOUS REBIRTH ESSENTIAL

If the heart of man remains unregenerate, his ingenuity will always find means to circumvent the laws of social justice. Selfishness is crafty and will quickly detect the loopholes in any legislative scheme in order to evade duty and procure mean advantages. No social order, however perfectly conceived, will work smoothly, as long as it is composed of men who seek only themselves and have no regard for the rights of others. Well says a thoughtful economist of our days:

"There is no scheme, no program, no equilibrium of weights, no sheaf of forces, however perfectly arranged, that cannot be defeated by men who have not in them the desire to be just, to be merciful, and even self-sacrificing."

Christianize men in the full sense of the word and you, at the same time, produce men who possess a deep sense of social responsibility and a keen sentiment of justice, who shrink from enriching themselves at the expense of their fellowmen and who refuse to erect gigantic fortunes on the ruined lives of their neighbors. Rugged individualism is the antithesis of Christian love and the taproot of all the economic ills that afflict modern society.

Nothing can overcome this selfish power but a rebirth of genuine Christian sentiment. The social reformer works in vain, if he does not devote his chief efforts to a restoration of Christian idealism. A better, juster and more charitable social order can only be the outcome of the combined endeavors of men, whose hearts have been touched and transformed by the Christian religion of brotherly love. Religious rebirth, therefore, is the first and indispensable step towards social reconstruction.

## NEED FOR A SOCIAL CONSCIENCE

The social conscience as a result of false philosophical teachings has become dulled. Business practices that would shock a normal conscience, not rendered callous and insensible by materialistic doctrines, no longer produce any reaction and are indulged in as a matter of course. Men are blind to the inherent injustice of the policies which our un-Christian economic order sanctions, and woefully indifferent to the human wreckage they create. Nothing outside of a revival of Christianity will succeed in putting a keener edge on this blunted social conscience of our generation.

By reminding society that it is responsible for the economic evils, which it tolerates, the Church will galvanize the moribund social conscience and raise the individual to that higher social vision which will make him see social as well as personal sin. She will din it into men's ears that to defraud labor, to foist inferior goods on the purchaser and to derive unfair gains from the needs of others, is not clever business but downright crime, though these practices may remain within the limits of legal justice. When men learn again that God's idea of justice is more exacting than that of human law, they will look with a different eye on certain business methods which so far they have regarded as inoffensive.

## RESTORATION OF SENSE OF VALUES

Perhaps the greatest contribution which Christianity can make to the reconstruction of society is a restoration of a true appreciation of values. To this point Leo XIII refers in very specific terms. "The things of earth," he says, "cannot be understood or valued aright, without taking into consideration the life to come, the life that will know no death." As long as men believe that wealth is the highest object to be sought, the struggle for the possession of material riches will be intensified to such a degree, that it will split mankind into hostile groups, and obliterate all feelings of human brotherhood. The desire for wealth in our days has assumed the proportions of a moral disease.

In their headlong pursuit of riches men forget everything else and become utterly indifferent to the means which they employ in the attainment of their end. No one

scrutinizes the ways by which he acquires and accumulates his fortune. In this respect we have sunk to the low level of pagan morality, which canonized wealth, no matter from which source it was derived, and placed a halo on the brow of the rich man, more desired than the crown of sanctity. The glitter of gold effaced every taint, even the darkest and bloodiest, attaching to its origin.

If modern society is to be redeemed from injustice, a basic revaluation of values is imperatively necessary. Such revaluation can only come from the teachings of Christ concerning the transient and ephemeral character of all things earthly and the blessedness of poverty. That beatitude which proclaims the blessedness of the poor is the most important social doctrine within the scope of Christian teaching. If honestly believed, it will at once moderate the striving for temporal possessions, make competition less heartless, induce the wealthy to share their superfluities with the poor and soften the bitter lot of those who are defeated in the economic struggle.

But with the proclamation of the modern un-Christian beatitude, which pronounces the rich blessed and the poor unhappy, the economic struggle will inevitably take on the character of brutal and ruthless warfare and outrival the fierce battles fought over their prey by the denizens of the jungle. Tell mankind that money is the key to everything desirable in life, and you unleash the most indomitable passion in the human breast and precipitate a war that knows no mercy. But if the vision of mankind remains confined within the horizon of time, wealth will loom overshadowingly large and prove of irresistible attraction.

Hence, Christianity directs the gaze of man to another world which by its beauty makes the glory of the world of sense fade into insignificance, and thus diminishes its fatal fascination. In this vivid appreciation of the next world with its greater riches and its purer joys, lies the remedy for mammonism with its immense gravitational pull and its deceptive enchantment. The other worldly outlook of Christianity alone can offset and counteract the witchcraft of the illusion of wealth, and prevent the rich from despising poverty and the economically less favored from hating and envying the rich and ardently desiring their possessions.



### THE DIGNITY OF LABOR

When the Papal Encyclicals speak of the dignity of labor this is more than mere perfunctory lip service. Man is born to work, and work of some kind is the indispensable condition of his physical, mental and moral development. Idleness constitutes no title to nobility and frequently leads to moral deterioration, as is too often manifest in those circles whose excessive wealth relieves them from the necessity of earning a living. The necessity to work is a great moral help and is no sign of inferiority. The dignity of labor should find appropriate expression in the social order, and not remain merely an abstract doctrine.

Social parasitism should be discouraged. We must learn to recognize that income from honest labor deserves more respect than unearned income, due to no merit but merely to fortunate circumstances. A just pride in the laborer and a proper reward of his services on the part of society will make the wage earner turn a deaf ear to the radical agitator who would inspire him with hatred against the social order. If labor receives the honor and the compensation which Christianity claims for it, we are in no danger of revolution. But labor stripped of its dignity and despised by an un-Christian society, becomes a menace to the social peace of the world.

### WHAT THE CHURCH TEACHES

Christianity makes for sanity in social reform. It furnishes a valuable corrective to the onesided and extreme views, advocated by many whose zeal outruns their knowledge and whose righteous moral indignation vitiates their judgment. Intensely practical and in intimate contact with human nature, it is thoroughly aware of human limitations and of the complexity of the social problem. It puts no trust in panaceas and discounts the promises of those who fancy that this little earth, which is the temporary abode of man, can ever be completely freed of thorns and weeds. It preaches justice without compromise, and in no way discourages the poor from seeking to improve their lot and to remove from their shoulders burdens unjustly imposed on them.

But it also preaches patience and resignation, and in a world of imperfections, such as ours is, patience and resig-

nation are as necessary as fiery zeal for justice. Well does Leo XIII admonish the prophets of a heaven on earth:

"To suffer and to endure is the lot of humanity; let them strive as they may, no strength and no artifice will ever succeed in banishing from human life the ills and troubles which beset it. If any there are who pretend differently—who hold out to hard-pressed people the boon of freedom from pain and affliction, an undisturbed repose, and constant enjoyment—they delude the people and impose upon them, and their lying promises will only one day bring forth evils worse than the present. Nothing is more useful than to look upon the world as it really is, and at the same time, to seek elsewhere as we have said, for the solace to its troubles."

Yet when the Church preaches patience and forbearance to the poor, she does not mean to encourage the unjust in their injustice nor to sanction any delay in necessary social reforms. Besides, if she rebukes impossible hopes, she also urges the Governments of the world, with all speed to introduce such reforms which are possible and which justice demands. The sober sense of the people will feel that the program which the Church offers is strong, because of its prudent moderation and that she has their welfare at heart, just because she holds out no false hopes.

If, as is the case, all economic evils and social wrongs spring from the fact that human society has departed from the spirit and the ideals of Christian living, then the Church, by her endeavor to bring men back to the recognition and practice of the teachings of the Gospel contributes more to social reconstruction than any other agency. She mobilizes the dynamic forces that will rebuild the world after a nobler pattern. And these forces cannot be defeated.

# The Catholic Is Anti-Bourgeois

F. L. BURKE

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THE spirit of our times is the bourgeois spirit; self-complacent, self-righteous, optimistic, materialistic. It is the spirit that exalts worldly success, that thrives on human exploitation, divorces morality from business, and religion from life. I do not infer that the twentieth century monopolizes the bourgeois spirit, still less originated it. For it is as old as man himself and will endure as long as men are mortal.

The bourgeois spirit is perhaps the fundamental, anti-Christian thing. It is usually not openly anti-Christian or even consciously so. Christians themselves in large numbers are infected with bourgeoisism. The Catholic social action movement is at root a campaign to shake off the bourgeois cloak. Bourgeoisism is a denial of the spirit, it frustrates the purpose of the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ, and renders the individual insensible to the life of the Church. It fills the life of the individual with worldly things.

Philosophers could preach the "autonomous" man, but material prosperity was of great assistance in making the masses believe it. Capitalism came as a result of the union of the bourgeois spirit with wealth and material resources. In the language of scholastic philosophy the "form" of capitalism is the bourgeois spirit, its "matter" wealth.

Bourgeoisism is a mark of American society. We may shudder at its ruthless exploitation of individuals and of society at large, but what is more important is that while people are still smarting under the depression, we see to it that such men will never again have the privilege and the power which they have exercised for their own advantage in the past. Now is the time for social reform for when prosperity returns, if it ever does, the masses and their political representatives will be satisfied to drift along with the system.

The only weapon with which to fight the bourgeois spirit is spirituality. The difference between Bourgeoisism and Christianity is a difference in values. One is fundamentally materialistic, while the other insists on a hierarchical order of values—God, man, things.

The Christian reform of our corrupt social order ultimately depends upon spiritual individuals. Personal sanctity is a prerequisite to any lasting, effective social reform. Given the individual sanctified with the grace of God, it is then necessary that he live the life of the Church; that he participate in, not merely attend the public worship of the Church; that he be conscious of his life in the Mystical Body of Christ.

Sanctified Christians living in Christ in the Church form the foundation stones of the Christian social order. Bourgeois, capitalist "classes," racial prejudices, selfish material interests lose all reason for existence in the light of the doctrine of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ. The integral Catholic, the "mystic body" Catholic is the antithesis of the Bourgeois. *"Twentieth century Catholicism,"* as Father Gerald Ellard says, *"is very definitely mystic body Catholicism."* That is the most significant religious news of our time.

## WE ARE OPPOSED TO ATHEISM

### *Because:*

1. It presumes to undo the work of the Son of God.
2. It is destructive of the foundations of morality.
3. It aims to destroy all religion—and religion offers the only solution to life's problems.
4. It reduces mankind to the same plane as the brute, in origin, in present purpose, and in destiny.
5. It enshrouds everything above material things in utter darkness.
6. It would wipe out the whole inheritance of good which has been handed down from virtuous forefathers and parents.
7. It is a doctrine of despair, offering mankind nothing beyond the labors and cares of this mundane life.
8. It would have everyone expect to be after death only a good fertilizer.

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